



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development
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USDA Rural Development to Hold Energy Meetings

Ainsworth, Neb., April 29, 2005 – USDA Rural Development will hold energy meetings in north central Nebraska regarding the \$22.8 million in grant funds available nationwide for Renewable Energy or Energy Efficiency Projects for small businesses in communities of 50,000 populations or less and to farmers and ranchers. The Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) was published in the March 28, 2005 Federal Register.

Informational energy program meetings are scheduled as follows:

- Tuesday, May 10th:
Atkinson - 10 a.m.-Noon CT-City Building 104 S. Main
Burwell - 3 p.m.-5 p.m. CT-TierOne Bank meeting room, 163 Grand Avenue
- Wednesday, May 11th
Mullen - 10:00 a.m.-Noon MT-Sandhills RC&D Office, 102 SE 2nd St.

Monies are available for Renewable Energy Systems such as wind, solar, biomass, biogas, and geothermal projects. Funding is also available for Energy Efficiency Improvement projects such as improvements to HVAC systems, insulation, refrigeration, lighting, pumping systems, air systems, motor systems, irrigation efficiency improvements, etc. Businesses interested in energy efficiency improvements to their business should consider this program for potential funding assistance. Farmers and ranchers may be assisted with irrigation system energy improvements, methane digesters for livestock waste, grain handling systems, wind turbines, solar systems, etc.

Grants are available for commercially available or pre-commercially available technologies for up to 25 percent of eligible project costs. Renewable Energy System requests can be considered for a grant minimum of \$2,500 and maximum of \$500,000. Energy Efficiency Improvement requests can be for a grant minimum of \$2,500 and \$250,000 maximum. Applications must be submitted to the USDA Rural Development Beatrice, Neb. Field Office postmarked no later than June 27, 2005.

Complete application information may be obtained by contacting USDA Rural Development-Dale Wemhoff at (402) 371-5350 ext 101 or Mary Gambill, (402) 387-2242 ext. 4, (402) 437-5093 (TTY). Visit <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ne/>.

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